

# Friends of St. Jude

Fighting poverty by spreading awareness

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Dear Friends of St. Jude,

It has now been a couple of weeks since we began to actively develop the Friends program. After contacting many dedicated individuals in our Friends program, we got an overwhelming response from people around the world. With all the work needing to be done here, testing for new students, the building of a new campus, keeping up to date with sponsorships and donations, the Friends program fell dormant, and my fear was that people had forgotten about raising awareness and spreading the word.

To my utter amazement, the emails that poured in to our Friends coordinator demonstrated exactly the opposite. All over the world, seeking no recognition, and armed with little more than some information about the school, and great intentions, amazing events were being planned and held. Whether as fundraisers, balls, film festivals, talent shows, bake sales, family gatherings, staff meetings, or lectures, the support that has been shown was just overwhelming.

## Friends in all shapes and sizes

The Friends program is for everyone. If you are a sponsor or a donor, if you are a student, if you have not yet reached standard 1, or are enjoying your retirement, there is always space for you on our Friends team. I am more than aware of the fact that despite often wishing they could, many people are simply not in a financial situation to donate or sponsor a child, classroom or bus at St. Jude's. But there are so many ways to help, which are equally important, whether in a fundraising capacity, or simply spreading awareness and passing on the word about the school. Anyone is welcome and appreciated as a Friend of St. Jude.

There is, for example, Eloise Bridgers, who at 10 has proved that you are never too young to show compassion, care and a will to make a difference. I was just amazed that someone so young already had such an awareness about the world.

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Eloise, aged 10, is one of our youngest friends, and stated: *"I had WAY WAY more than I needed. I thought that a lot of people needed help in Africa and needed an education. I am raising money at my school ...I am selling sweets and lemonade. And I really think it is great to know that you can make a difference in the world. So far I have raised 92.55 and I hope to get up to 100 by Christmas."*

## Friends in all shapes and sizes



Joan Carr, one of our Senior friends, has dedicated much of her time and energy to spread awareness among her peers. She is an amazing asset to the School of St Jude: *"I'm proud to see myself connected to such a great organization! I will never stop talking about St Judes, you can be sure of that!"*

If you need more promotional materials, have questions, or simply wish to get in touch with us, feel free to contact me ([schoolofstjude@habari.co.tz](mailto:schoolofstjude@habari.co.tz)) anytime. We have new information, event pictures and event ideas up on our website now, so send us your comments, ideas and pictures, so that we can make Friends better than ever. [www.schoolofstjude.co.tz](http://www.schoolofstjude.co.tz), under Support Us.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication. I can't wait to hear from you!

With Love,

*Gemma*

The Friends Program is not about raising money, though often events are used as fundraisers. Sometimes I get emails from Friends apologizing that people did not donate money, and I keep wanting to make this clear. Friends is about raising awareness, not money. Anyone who passes on my book, or holds a family gathering, watches the DVD with friends or work colleagues is doing exactly what the program was designed to do.

Another amazing story that came to my attention is that of Joan Carr, who since receiving the Friends pack has used the photos on the CD to make a PowerPoint presentation with around 60 photos, which she takes from function to function as a speaker about St.Jude. So far she has talked about St Judes at 5 different Schools for Seniors and also Clarence University of the Third. Joan, Eloise and many others have shown that anyone can be involved and be a Friend. Without such support, we could never achieve what we do down here.

### Looking Forwards

I am really hoping that this support will continue, and that awareness about what can and is being done here at St. Jude will grow. I wish I had the time, resources and energy to fly all over the world and talk to all the people who are interested in helping. I know how many people are weary of organizations, who give little feedback about where funds end up. The Friends program brings this news to the world, and as we work hard on updating the website, our database and making Friends a bigger priority of the School, I would love to see some pictures of the events.



Frances Holms and four Somali students who participated in their fantastic concert, spreading awareness about St. Jude and education in Africa. Her inspirational motto is: "if your intentions in life are to serve the greater good and not seek glory for your self god will always step up and help". (Her story will be featured in the next newsletter and on our website.)